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RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE PRIORITY 3189
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 000438

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: JAPAN SUPPORTS U.S. POSITION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

REF: STATE 06667

Classified By: Ambassador J.Thomas Schieffer. Reasons 1.4 (B) (D)

11. (SBU) This message contains an action request. See para 8.

12. (C) Summary. Japan supports the U.S. position on cluster munitions (CM) and believes that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is the best venue for discussing the issue, according to MOFA officials. Japanese authorities are "'bewildered'" by Norway's attempt to circumvent the CCW process, but understand that the Oslo initiative will not seek a total ban on CM. End Summary.

13. (C) On January 30, Embassy political officer delivered reftel demarche seeking Japan's cooperation on cluster munitions (CM) to Maiko Tamagawa in MOFA's Conventional Arms Division. Tamagawa promised to pass the demarche to the International Policy Planning Division at the Ministry of Defense (MOD). MOD officials will review reftel proposal for direct military-to-military discussions on the use of CM and provide a response as soon as possible, she said. Tamagawa asked that the U.S. provide specific information and details on how the direct dialogue would take shape.

14. (C) According to Tamagawa, Japan maintains CM for defensive purposes, believing such weapons to be both necessary and effective. At the same time, discussion in the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) should take into account the humanitarian issues associated with the use of cluster munitions. Japan looks to balance the humanitarian vs. military-security aspects of CM. However, in order to be effective, the discussion on CM must involve the main countries that produce, possess, and use CM, she said. Japan believes that the CCW is the most appropriate venue for discussing CM because the convention provides a forum in which the countries that are most involved in the use of cluster munitions can attempt to balance CM's humanitarian vs. military aspects.

15. (C) Japanese officials are "'bewildered,'" Tamagawa said, by Norway's move to go outside of the CCW process at a time when the CCW is just about to discuss the issue. She said that it would be important for all the parties to have substantive

talks at the next CCW session so as not to boost Norway's effort to go outside the CCW process. Japanese officials have heard, however, that the Norway proposal is not intended to exclude discussion on CM at the CCW. The Norwegians, she noted, do not seek to obtain the kind of total ban on CM that, e.g., the Ottawa Treaty imposes on anti-personnel landmines.

¶16. (C) Norway did not invite Japan to the Oslo conference and Tokyo is considering whether it will ask for an invitation, Tamagawa reported. Tokyo authorities have heard that Australia, Canada, Finland, and Italy are likewise considering whether or not to request invitations. Japan will attend the April ICRC meeting in Montreux, where Tokyo hopes to have a more balanced discussion vis--vis the negotiations that are expected to take place at the Oslo meeting. Tamagawa noted that the June 19-22 government experts meeting would take stock of the ICRC gathering, thereby giving the April Montreux discussion added importance. Japanese officials have not yet developed a final position on the potential legal or political restrictions on CM use that might arise during the negotiations.

¶17. (C) Tamagawa said that, for domestic political reasons, the Japanese government would find it impossible to ignore CM. Public interest in CM, and in Norway's proposed Oslo conference, continues to grow. Newspapers and other media have reported on the issue, and a few NGO's have expressed support for the Oslo process. MOFA expects some opposition Diet members to take up the issue during the current legislative session.

¶18. (C) ACTION REQUEST: Per Tamagawa's request, please provide more specific information on the proposed military-to-military discussions on the use of CM.
SCHIEFFER